Paul Cain: Association with the Kansas City Prophets and Homosexual Confession

Early Ministry and Background

Paul Cain (June 16, 1929 – February 12, 2019) began his ministry as a teenage healing evangelist during the post-World War II healing revival movement of the 1940s and 1950s. At age 18 in 1947, he became one of the youngest prominent ministers in what was known as the Voice of Healing Revival, working alongside notable figures like William Branham and Oral Roberts. Cain gained recognition for his purported supernatural gifts, particularly words of knowledge, and conducted large tent meetings in the United States and Europe, drawing crowds of up to 30,000 people in Switzerland and Germany.[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

By the late 1950s, however, Cain disappeared from public ministry, reportedly disillusioned with what he perceived as corruption and excess within the healing revival movement. According to his own accounts, he went into seclusion for more than 25 years.[6] [5] [1]

Re-emergence and the Kansas City Prophets

Cain re-emerged in the late 1980s through his association with Mike Bickle and the Kansas City Fellowship (later Metro Vineyard Fellowship). In late 1988, Cain contacted John Wimber, founder of the Vineyard movement, reportedly to warn him about the need for greater holiness within the Vineyard churches. Wimber became fascinated by Cain's apparent prophetic accuracy and promoted him extensively.[7] [8] [9] [1]

Through this connection, Cain became prominently associated with what became known as the Kansas City Prophets—a group that included Mike Bickle (the pastor), Bob Jones, John Paul Jackson, and Cain himself. This prophetic movement, which emerged from Kansas City Fellowship in the 1980s, emphasized supernatural prophecy, words of knowledge, and end-times theology. The Kansas City Fellowship joined the Association of Vineyard Churches in 1990, though it later separated in 1996 due to theological differences.[10] [11] [12] [13] [14]

The Kansas City Prophets gained significant influence in charismatic and neo-charismatic circles during the late 1980s and early 1990s, with Cain being celebrated for his seemingly extraordinary prophetic abilities. However, the movement was also controversial from the start, facing criticism from other charismatic leaders, including Ernie Gruen, who compiled extensive documentation of what he considered false prophecies and problematic teachings.[15] [14] [16] [7]

Exposure of Homosexual Activity and Alcoholism

In February 2004, the leadership team overseeing Cain's ministry—consisting of Rick Joyner, Mike Bickle, and Jack Deere—learned that Cain had become an alcoholic. In April 2004, they confronted him with evidence of recent homosexual activity. According to their October 2004 public statement, Cain initially admitted to these sins and agreed to submit to a restoration process under their oversight.[17] [18] [1]

However, Cain soon resisted the restoration process and retracted his initial confession. He even obtained letters from doctors vouching for his emotional health and denied the allegations on his website. When it became clear that Cain was not cooperating with the discipline process and the leadership team had evidence he was continuing in sin, they made their charges public in October 2004, following the Matthew 18 process of church discipline.[18] [1] [17]

Jack Deere later revealed that Cain's assistant had been instrumental in exposing the truth, reporting consistent abuse, dishonesty, drunkenness, and a "secret history of sexual immorality". The assistant also disclosed that Cain recorded all his phone conversations for potential blackmail purposes. Multiple witnesses from Cain's past came forward with allegations of sexual misconduct and abuse.[17]

Public Confession and Aftermath

After months of denial, Cain issued a public confession in January 2005 through a letter posted on his website and excerpted in *Charisma Magazine*. In this confession, he stated: "I have struggled with homosexuality for an extended period of time. I have struggled with alcoholism for an extended period of time. I apologize for denying these matters of truth, rather than readily admitting them. I am ashamed of what I have done to hurt those close to me and for the pain I have caused those who have believed in my ministry".[19] [2] [1]

At age 75, Cain stepped down from ministry in February 2005. The leaders who had confronted him expressed regret for having overlooked warning signs and for prioritizing Cain's prophetic gifting over character issues. Jack Deere acknowledged: "We all have preached that you never put gifting over character, but that is what we did for Paul. We would have fired anyone else. The reason we didn't is because of [Cain's] gifting. We let that gifting excuse character".[2] [1] [19]

Deere later revealed additional disturbing information: the revival leaders of the 1940s healing movement had actually forced Cain to leave the stage decades earlier due to his own sexual impurity, contrary to Cain's claims that he had voluntarily withdrawn because of other ministers' corruption.[17]

Attempted Restoration and Continued Controversy

Initially, Larry Alberts led a restoration team for Cain. However, in 2006, Cain left this oversight and moved to California to work with a different group led by David Andrade of RTV International Ministries. By September 2007, Andrade claimed Cain had been restored and was able to minister again freely.[20] [5] [19]

However, Rick Joyner, Mike Bickle, and Jack Deere expressed serious concerns about this premature restoration announcement. In a 2007 statement, they emphasized they had no confidence in the new restoration process since they did not know the California team or what process Cain had undergone. They stressed that forgiveness of sin is not the same as restoration to public ministry and warned that releasing Cain prematurely could lead to relapse and harm to others.[20]

According to Jack Deere's 2024 account, Cain never showed genuine repentance. Deere stated: "I never saw any sign of repentance in Paul's life. I continued to hear reports of him threatening former friends if they did not exonerate him and stop telling stories of his abusive behavior toward them". Deere noted that Cain initially confessed to *Charisma Magazine* in 2005 but denied the confession two years later after finding someone to "restore" him. Rick Joyner similarly reported that even years later, evidence emerged of Cain continuing problematic behavior.[21] [22] [17]

Deere concluded that "there is significant evidence against him knowing Jesus," noting that Cain consistently drew people to himself rather than to God, never freely confessed sin, always blamed others, and showed no sorrow over his failures. Cain never returned to prominence in ministry despite claims of restoration.[17]

Death and Legacy

Paul Cain died on February 12, 2019, at age 89 in California. His death marked the end of a controversial legacy that included both remarkable claims of prophetic accuracy during his active ministry and a devastating moral failure that exposed long-term patterns of homosexual activity and alcoholism. The Cain scandal became a cautionary tale within charismatic circles about the dangers of elevating spiritual gifting over character and the importance of proper accountability for leaders.[23] [24] [1] [2] [15]

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